

the Mentally Retarded formed a foundation in Mr. Murphy's honor to continue his work.

On May 18, 1977, the John F. Murphy Foundation for the Mentally Retarded was officially established with the mission to provide housing for individuals with developmental disabilities. In March of 1978, they opened their first home at 23 Pleasant St. in Lewiston for 6 people. Today, the agency provides direct support to hundreds of Mainers and their families, employs more than 700 people in the greater Lewiston-Auburn area, and generates millions of dollars in local economic activity.

John F. Murphy Homes has helped to raise awareness about intellectual disabilities and the need for group care facilities. The organization's remarkable success is owed to the outstanding vision of its founders and the tireless work of its employees. In January, John F. Murphy Homes received a \$1.7 million grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development to continue their important work.

John F. Murphy's example has truly made the Lewiston-Auburn community a better place for the mentally retarded.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating the John F. Murphy Homes on achieving 35 years of exemplary service to the Lewiston-Auburn community.

RECOGNIZING THE USDA FOR 150 YEARS OF SERVICE

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2012

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise to salute the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and its dedicated employees for 150 years of service to America. By working with farmers across America, the USDA has built the most productive, efficient agricultural economy on earth. It has rescued whole regions from the Dust Bowl, diversified production in the South to end regional dependence on cotton, led efforts to restore estuaries like the Chesapeake Bay through conservation programs, financed rural development, and rebuilt agriculture in war-torn countries in partnership with the Armed Services.

America's food security today stands in stark contrast to other industrialized countries which are heavily dependent on food imports. Only because of the USDA's work do we enjoy this security, which includes affordable food for working Americans. Today the USDA is working to ensure that food security includes healthy foods which address America's most challenging chronic health problems. Under Secretary Vilsack, the USDA is leading efforts to redevelop local food production. The benefits of this initiative are evident in my home state of Virginia, where growing wine, cheese, fruit, and vegetable production is bringing land back into production which had been fallow for decades. The USDA is much more than agriculture; it pursues a comprehensive program of rural development, and its recent efforts to strengthen local food supplies are emblematic of this comprehensive approach.

The USDA is playing a central role in conserving America's natural resources, as it has since its inception. Photographs from the

Works Progress Administration should serve as a reminder of the resources that would have been lost but for USDA leadership. Before we had comprehensive agricultural conservation programs, cubic miles of prime soils were being lost throughout the South and Midwest to erosion from wind and rain. The USDA pioneered soil conservation methods which ensured that these regions would remain productive for generations to come. Building on that early success, USDA conservation programs are responsible for reducing agricultural pollution entering the Chesapeake Bay and other estuaries, ensuring that Americans can enjoy productive fisheries as well as productive agricultural lands.

In an era where government is disparaged all too frequently, the USDA is a shining example of the benefits of federal service. We never could have become the most powerful, prosperous nation on earth without the agency which worked with farmers to feed our armies and our workforce, and to conserve those natural resources that we will rely on for the next 150 years.

REMEMBERING CONSTANTINE G. VALANOS

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2012

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I doubt there is a single member of this House or the Senate who has never set foot inside the Monocle on D Street. Just steps from the Capitol, the Monocle has been a political institution as much as it has been a warm and welcoming restaurant. Its tables have long been set with a spirit of friendship that transcends party; they have been host to meetings and discussions on nearly every issue of national importance. The Monocle has been a place of agreement, often at times when disagreement divided us in this House.

It was Constantine Valanos who brought that warm and inviting place to Capitol Hill and to all who serve here. Many of us knew Connie well. Connie made a point of knowing and remembering all of us who set foot in his restaurant, even if just once in a while. Sadly, Connie passed away last month at age 93.

Constantine George Valanos was born into a family of Greek immigrants in Albany, New York, as the First World War was drawing to a close. He grew up here in Washington, D.C., and served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. Following his discharge, Connie attended the George Washington University and pursued a career in accounting. In 1960, seeing an opportunity to buy and fix up an old restaurant on Capitol Hill, Connie and his wife, Helen—who passed away in 2005 after a fifty-three year marriage—opened the Monocle.

Among their first regular customers were then-Senators John F. Kennedy and Richard Nixon. Over the next fifty years the Monocle would see a steady stream of Senators, Representatives, future Presidents and Vice Presidents, Supreme Court justices, foreign diplomats, and ordinary Americans visiting with their elected officials.

After three decades at the helm, Connie and Helen passed the management of the business to their son, John, and daughter-in-law,

Vasiliki, who continue to run the Monocle today and provide the same friendly and welcoming environment to all who step through the door.

The ancient Greek statesman Pericles said: "What you leave behind is not what is engraved in monuments of stone but what is woven into the lives of others." Connie Valanos leaves behind a legacy not only of a restaurant but also of the countless ways in which he made that restaurant a place where leaders come together to hash out the agreements that help make our Nation great and improve lives around the world. The Monocle, as former Vice President and regular patron Walter Mondale once noted, is "where laws are debated, where policies are set, and where the course of world history is changed." That is Connie's lasting legacy.

I join in celebrating Connie's life and in offering my condolences to his wife Judith, his children, John and George, his three grandchildren, and the entire Valanos family.

RECOGNIZING JESSIE "DINK" HOSMAN

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2012

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the 91st birthday of Jessie C. "Dink" Hosman who was born June 3, 1921, and grew up in the Willard, Missouri area.

During World War II, Technician Fifth Grade Hosman was in Company B, 1st Battalion, White Combat Team, which fought all over Burma with "Merrill's Marauders". T/5 Hosman fought through some of the harshest conditions of the war where the enemy was often less of a concern than malaria, deadly Mite Typhus, Amoebic Dysentery, and malnutrition. T/5 Hosman spent two years in the jungle and also served in Panama and India. Being a member of "Merrill's Marauders" earned T/5 Hosman the distinction of United States Army Ranger.

T/5 Hosman helped secure the strategic Burma Road while it was being built in treacherous conditions. Extraordinarily, while "Merrill's Marauders" had such a high casualty rate, they never left a fellow soldier's body behind. T/5 Hosman received the Combat Infantryman Badge, the Presidential Unit Citation, and the Bronze Star Medal for exemplary service.

After the war, Jessie returned stateside and spent some time in San Francisco where he was given everything and anything he wanted to eat to make up for two years of malnutrition. Eventually Jessie returned home to the Willard area where he raised his family and purchased a farm where he ran a milk and beef cattle operation for 50 years.

These days, Jessie is enjoying life and taking it easy living with his daughter, Terri Hughes, and her husband, Jimmy Hughes, in Walnut Grove, Missouri. He still enjoys his hobbies of fishing, hunting, boating and his RV. Jessie has also attended several "Merrill's Marauders" reunions.

As the years create more and more distance from the events and heroes that defined World War II, I personally wanted to take this